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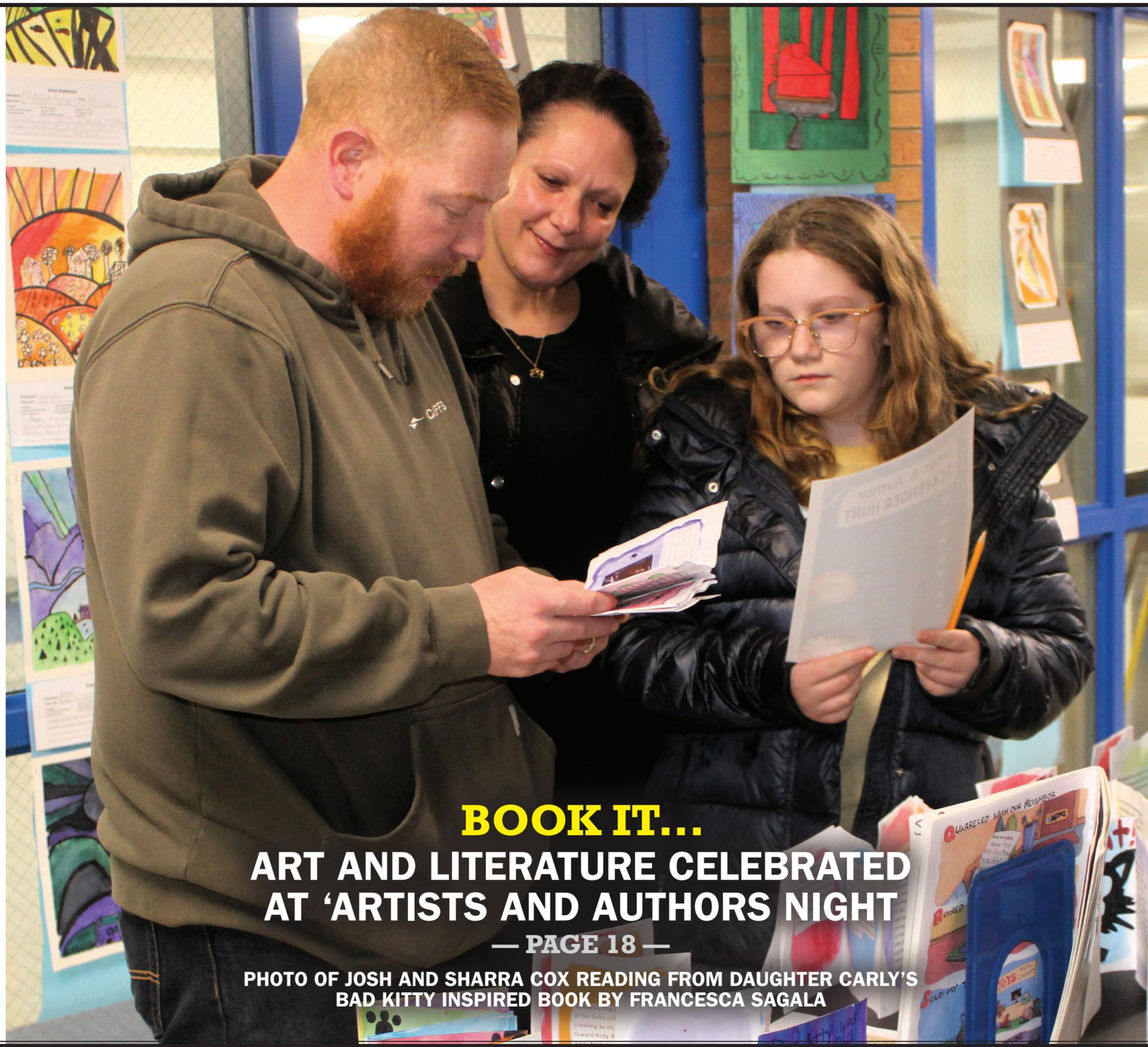

BOOK IT...

ART AND LITERATURE CELEBRATED AT 'ARTISTS AND AUTHORS NIGHT

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PHOTO OF JOSH AND SHARRA COX READING FROM DAUGHTER CARLY'S BAD KITTY INSPIRED BOOK BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

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Berrien County Health Department provides safety tips ahead of spring break travel season

As many community members prepare for spring break travel, the Berrien County Health Department is providing safety tips and highlighting its immunization services.

"As individuals and families prepare to escape Michigan's cold temperatures for warmer destinations, we're encouraging them to make sure they're up to date on vaccinations and practice good hygiene to ensure everyone stays healthy and safe," Health Officer Guy Miller said.

The Health Department shares these safety tips for spring break travelers:

- Make sure you are up to date on routine vaccinations. BCHD offers a wide range of vaccines, from COVID-19 to hepatitis A and measles, mumps and rubella. If traveling out of the country, check the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's destination pages for travel health information specific to that country.
- Pack a travel health kit with items you may need, such as over-the-counter medicines, face masks, alcohol-based hand sanitizer and your health insurance card.
- When traveling by car, always wear a seatbelt and make sure children are in an approved car seat.
- Practice good hygiene by routinely washing hands, especially in high-traffic areas such as airports, amusement parks, beaches, etc.
- If traveling to warmer destinations, protect yourself from the sun by wearing loose, lightweight clothing, staying hydrated and applying sunscreen regularly with a sun protection factor of 15 or higher to prevent sunburn.
- Use insect repellent to avoid bug bites. Bugs, such as mosquitos and ticks, can spread disease.

"It's also important to monitor your health after you've returned, especially if you've traveled internationally," Miller said. "If you feel sick after a recent trip, talk to your health care provider about the areas you visited."

Community members can call 269-926-7121 to schedule a vaccination appointment and can learn more about BCHD's vaccination services at www.berriencounty.org/639/immunizations.

— STAFF REPORTS

OWI arrest follows scare with flagman

BY STAN MADDUX

A flock camera allowed police to catch an alleged drunk driver who fled after a close encounter with a flagman at a La Porte County intersection.

Phillip Hoopingarner, 51, is charged with operating while intoxicated and never receiving a driver's license.

He was also taken into custody for failing to appear on an arrest warrant issued out of Lake County.

According to La Porte County Police, the Chesterton man on Feb. 27 was traveling at a high rate of speed on Wozniak Road in Coolspring Township when he slammed on his brakes and skidded to a stop for a flagman.

During an argument, police said Hoopingarner began pulling away but the flagman had to jump out of the way.

The front bumper of the vehicle still clipped his knee.

In response, the flagman called 911.

Police said a flock camera picked up the suspect's vehicle in La Porte, where a responding officer spotted it on Pine Lake Avenue.

The vehicle was stopped in the parking lot of a McDonald's restaurant, where Hoopingarner was placed in handcuffs after refusing a certified blood alcohol test.

Police said there was an odor of alcohol on his breath along with alcoholic beverage containers in his vehicle.

Flagman reported he was not injured.

The nature of sorrow is to want something that does not arrive. The antidote you ask? Don't want it.
— Dino N. Fatouros

Local Government Meetings

New Buffalo Times

Democracy Requires Transparency

CITY OF NEW BUFFALO
VANCE PRICE, MAYOR
CITY COUNCIL
MARK ROBERTSON, ROGER LIJEWSKI, KAREN GEAR, RICH KNOLL, VANCE PRICE
City Council meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:30PM
CITY OF NEW BUFFALO PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 5:30PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP BOARD
HOWARD MALES, MICHELLE HEIT, MICHELLE HANNON, PATTY IAZZETTO, BARBARA ANDERSON
Board meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 4PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM
SHERIFF BERRIEN COUNTY
Sheriff, Chuck Heit
Undersheriff, Greg Sanders
NEW BUFFALO AREA RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY
Meets at 10AM on the 2nd Wednesday of every other month (odd) at New Buffalo Township Hall, 17425 Red Arrow Highway New Buffalo
NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS BOARD
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CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP BOARD
DAVID BUNTE, PAULA DUDIAK, LIZ RETTIG, RICHARD SULLIVAN, ARTHUR ANDERSON
Chikaming Board meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30PM
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 6:30PM
THREE OAKS
THREE OAKS TOWNSHIP BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7PM
VILLAGE OF THREE OAKS BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7PM
GRAND BEACH
Meets on the 3rd Wednesday at 5PM EST
KIMBERLY WOLNIK, CLERK-TREASURER
HARRY WALDER, JACK GRACE, ED SEBASTIAN, PETER DOERR, EDWARD BRANDES
MICHIANA
VILLAGE OF MICHIANA COUNCIL
Meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at 1PM

Possible countdown in fight over final dispensary site

BY STAN MADDUX

There could be an upcoming break in the deadlock over rights to build what looks to be the final marijuana dispensary allowed in New Buffalo Township.

During its regularly monthly meeting Tuesday, March 4, the New Buffalo Township Planning Commission discussed possible changes to an existing ordinance governing special land use permits.

Norris Shaba is with a group of developers granted a special land use permit about a year ago to construct a marijuana dispensary before the township imposed a moratorium on any further such establishments.

He wants to place it at a site along U.S. 12 his group has been trying to purchase from multiple landowners.

Shaba told the planning commission $200,000 or more has been spent by his group preparing the ground near Grand Beach for development; however, the project has been plagued by various roadblocks, which have delayed completion of the project.

The latest hang-up is the landowners no longer willing to sell now because of them receiving much higher offers from other people recently for the property.

"Every which way we have turned it's been a nightmare," he said.

After months of delays, one of the current landowners, Jerry Looney, said he's ready to act on selling the property to another purchaser but can't since Shaba and his group hold the special land use unit permit.

Looney said the permit should revert to the landowners, which would allow them to sell the property to another buyer and transfer the permit to the purchaser.

The other prospective buyers are interested in the land but only if it comes with the permit allowing for construction of a dispensary.

"It can't do anything," said Looney.

Planning Commission Chairman Traci Lauricella said there have been recent discussions about possibly amending the ordinance to allow a special land use to revert to property owners if holders fail to act on the permit.

"I feel we should impose a time limit," she said.

Pano Arvanitis, another member of the Planning Commission, agreed.

"I don't feel they should be allowed to hold it forever. At what point do we say goodbye," he said.

Lauricella said any decision by the planning commission to change the ordinance in the coming months would have to be given final approval by the township board.

Contractor fraud alleged by owner of horse stables

BY STAN MADDUX

A man is facing potential time in prison for allegedly taking money but not finishing a job he was hired to do where horses are kept near Rolling Prairie.

Joshua Pratt is charged in La Porte Circuit Court with Level 6 felony fraud.

According to court documents, a La Porte County Police officer in late November responded to Transitions Equestrian Center in the 2500 block of E. 850 North.

Police said the owner reported Pratt, who claimed to be an old high school classmate, offered to finish some electrical work at the business without charging for labor.

The owner hired him and agreed to his request for an advanced cash payment of more than $3,200 for lumber and other materials.

Initially, he showed up to perform the jobs that included trenching an area outside for an electrical hook-up and work on an indoor electrical outlets, according to court documents.

However, the owner described the work as "unsatisfactory" and unfinished, with live wires creating a fire hazard in the barn housing more than 40 horses.

Police said the owner tried contacting Pratt, who became distant and difficult to reach.

After not hearing back from him, the owner posted a warning about what she believed was a scam on social media.

In response, police said that, in text messages, Pratt requested the owner remove the post and promised to return to the property the next day.

However, the owner asked him to refund her payments and not return, police said.

According to court documents, Pratt told investigators the job was 90 percent finished and the owner still owed him for the labor.

He blamed a death in the family, health concerns and other things for not returning to the job site, police said.

Pratt could face an up to 30 month sentence, if convicted.

Court documents revealed Pratt was involved in a dozen small claims civil cases from 2006 to 2018.

The secret of business is to know something that nobody else knows. —
Aristotle Onassis

Police chief in La Porte resigns

BY STAN MADDUX

There's an acting police chief in La Porte following the unexpected departure of the man formerly in charge at the department.

Dick Buell resigned the afternoon of Tuesday, March 4, following a lengthy career in various aspects of law enforcement.

"I think he felt it was time," said Mayor Tom Dermody.

Buell came out of retirement to become police chief in February of 2024 at the request of Dermody, who wanted his veteran leadership to set a positive example at the young department.

"He is my old school type of leader, which I appreciated. He knew exactly how to get the best out of his team," Dermody said.

Buell, 71, spent his first five years in law enforcement with the department before moving on to the La Porte County Sheriff's Office, where he moved up the ranks to chief of detectives and jail commander.

He went on to become director of La Porte County Community Corrections before retiring in 2019.

Matthew Drangmeister, an over 17 year member of the department serving as assistant chief under Buell, was named acting chief until the naming of a permanent replacement.

Dermody said Buell's resignation came as a surprise but he also didn't expect him to hold the position for a long time when hired.

"He did exactly and did everything that I could have asked of him. I wish him well, he said.

At the time, the hiring of Buell upset the La Porte Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 54 because past chiefs in the city, historically, came from within the department.

The FOP threatened legal action and not to recognize him as chief, which prompted Dermody to warn any officer not listening to Buell would be dealt with on the grounds of insubordination.

Dermody said Buell also set high expectations for his officers and, despite his initial unwelcome reception, was able to bring them together as a team.

"I think the City of La Porte is in a better place because of him," he said.

Eventually, Drangmeister said officers warmed up to and respected Buell, who he described as intelligent, easy to get along with and "a great person."

"There was an adjustment period, of course, but he was accepted once people got to know him," he said.

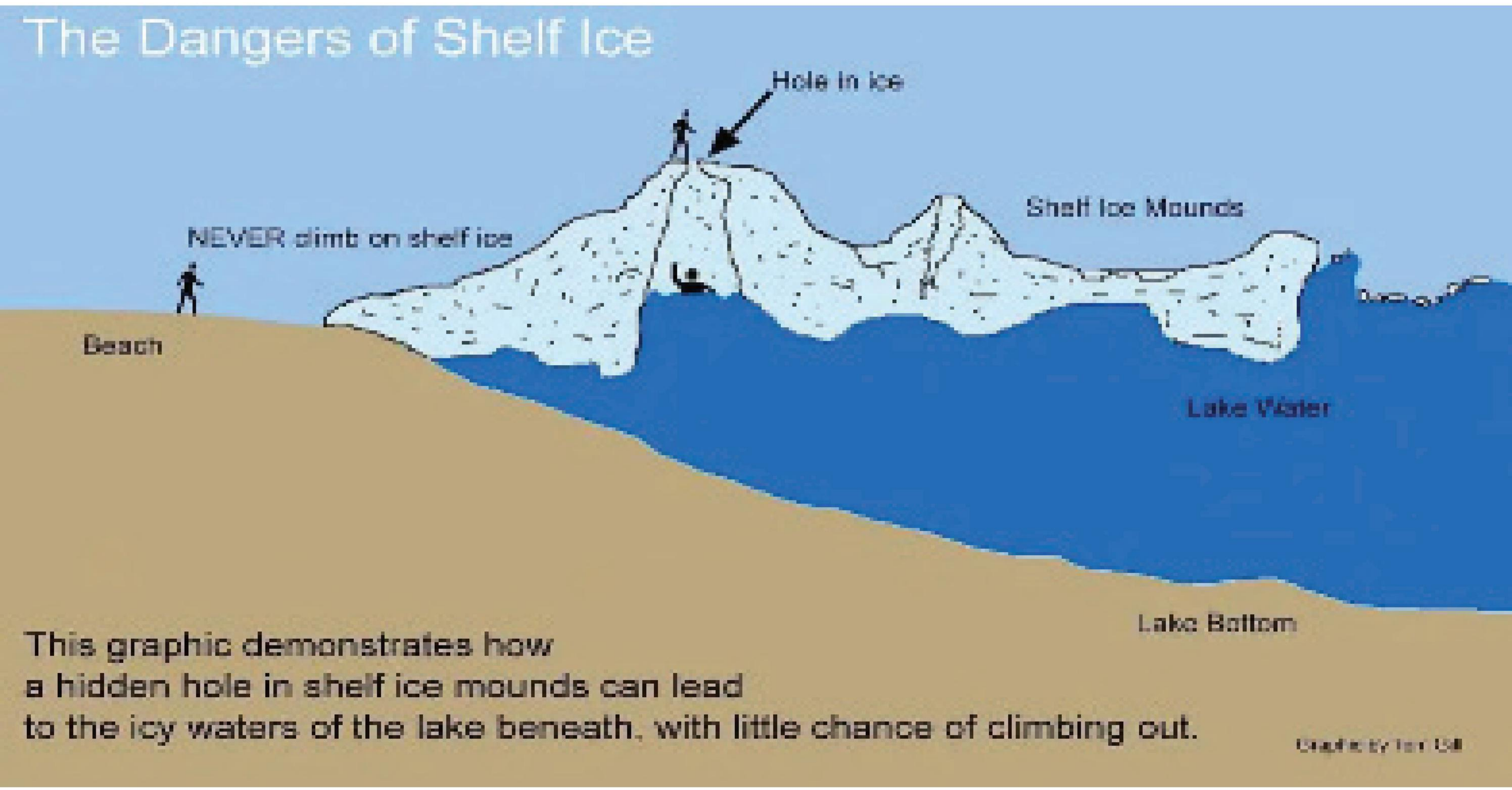
He also said there was a lot to learn from Buell, but he was most impressed by his ability to remain calm no matter what the situation and think of different ways to address a problem.

Drangmeister said he plans to apply for the job as police chief on a permanent basis.

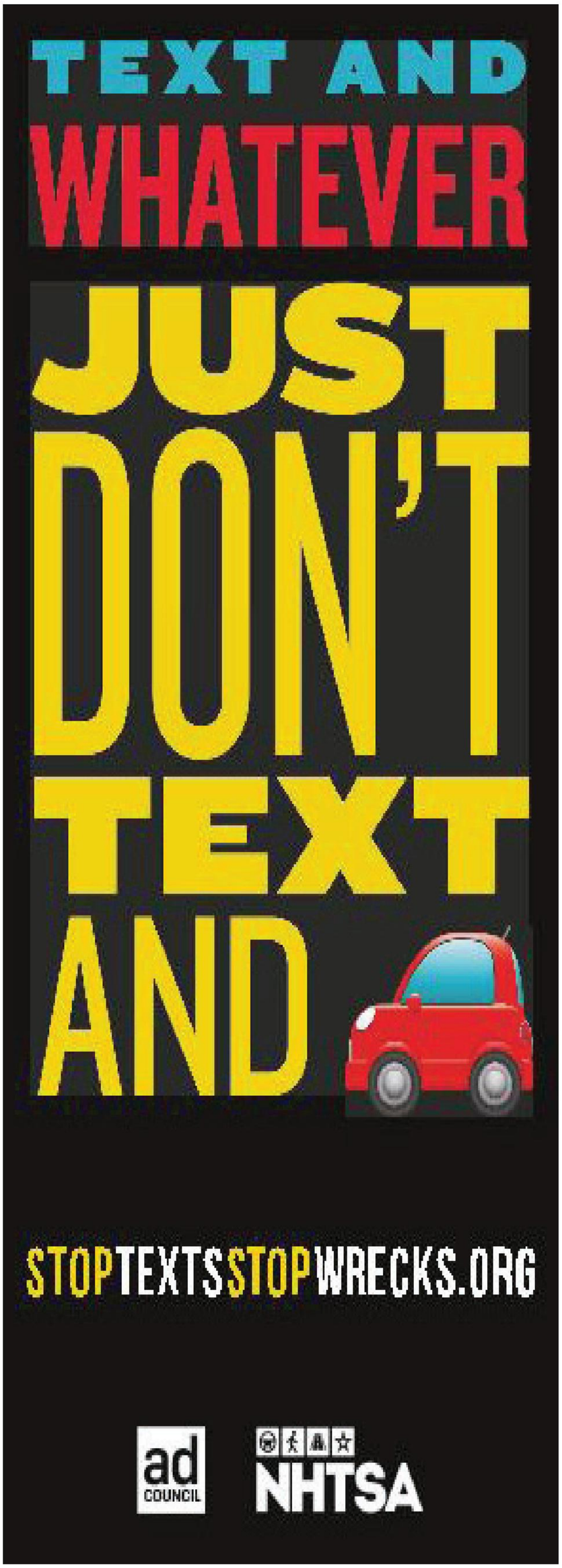
"Like with any new chapter in life, it's intimidating but you got to be willing to turn that page and go into that new chapter," he said.

Buell, a former high school football standout in Michigan City who went on to play in college, replaced Paul Brettin.

After four years as chief, Brettin retired following a 30-year law enforcement career at the department.



This graphic demonstrates how a hidden hole in shelf ice mounds can lead to the icy waters of the lake beneath, with little chance of climbing out.



Dunes Arts Foundation to present August Wilson's 'Two Trains Running,' performed by The Acting Company

The Dunes Arts Foundation is proud to present a special concert reading of August Wilson's Pulitzer Prize-nominated play "Two Trains Running," in partnership with The Acting Company, New York's famed touring company.

Marking the only Chicagoland appearance of the Company's 2025 tour, this reading will take place at 7 p.m. CST (8 p.m. EST) Monday, March 24, at the Holdcraft Performing Arts Center located at1200 Spring Street. This performance will include a brief post-performance discussion with the cast. This is a pay-what -you-can event; suggested ticket prices are $5 to $50.

"We couldn't be prouder to bring this amazing company and play to Northwest Indiana," says Steve Scott, artistic director of the Dunes Arts Foundation. "August Wilson is one of the greatest American playwrights of the past century, and 'Two Trains Running' is one of his most beautiful and important examinations of the Black experience in 20th century America. This is a must-see event for anyone interested in the power of great storytelling."

Hailed as "the theater's poet of Black America" by Charles Isherwood of The New York Times, August Wilson (1945-2005) won worldwide fame for his Century Cycle, a series of plays (mostly set in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Wilson's boyhood home) that examines the Black experience in America in each decade of the 20th century. The winner of two Pulitzer Prizes (for "Fences" and "The Piano Lesson," both of which have had highly praised film adaptations), Wilson was inducted into the American Theater Hall of Fame in 2006.

"Two Trains Running," which was originally produced in Chicago by The Goodman Theatre, is set in 1968 in Pittsburgh's Hill District. The story centers on Memphis Lee, a diner owner navigating the explosive effects of the civil rights movement, as he deals with the uncertain fate of his business. The seventh play in Wilson's cycle, "Two Trains Running" features memorably drawn characters dealing with hope, joy, love and resilience amid adversity.

Founded in 1972 by John Houseman and Margot Harley, The Acting Company has launched the careers of nearly 500 actors, including future stars such as Patti Lupone, Kevin Kline, Jeffrey Wright and Jesse L. Martin, and has performed for over four million people. Under artistic director Kent Gash, the Company offers productions and educational programs to over 20,000 audience members and 2,000 students annually.

"Two Trains Running" will be directed by Chicago native Lili-Anne Brown, whose work has been seen at Chicago's Goodman Theatre, as well as the McCarter Theatre, Arena Stage, Huntington Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival and The Muny in St. Louis. She is the recipient of the Helen Hayes Award, five Joseph Jefferson Awards, two Black Theatre Alliance Awards and an African American Alliance Award. Actors in the production include:

- J'Laney Allen (Classical Theatre of Harlem, graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts);
- Chuckie Benson (Oregon Shakespeare Festival, McCarter Theatre, Goodspeed Musicals, graduate of Western Michigan University);
- Brian D. Coats (Manhattan Theatre Club, Lincoln Center Theatre, The Public Theatre; appearances on "Boardwalk Empire" and "Law & Order");
- Robert Cornelius (Goodman Theatre, Signature Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre, Goodspeed Musicals; appearances on "The Chi," "South Side," "Chicago PD," "Shameless" and "Turks");
- James Milord (Huntington Theatre, Actors Shakespeare Project; appearances in "Salem's Lot," "Honest Thief," "Proud Mary" and "The Brotherhood");
- Michael Sheppard (Broadway's "Little Shop of Horrors," appearances on "NCIS," "Bosch," "Curb Your Enthusiasm," "Monk" and "Criminal Minds") and
- DeAnna Supplee (La Mama, The Flea, Edinburgh Fringe Festival; appearances on "Elsbeth" and "Law & Order SVU").
- Additional Acting Company cast members include Diana Coates and Jeffrey Rashad.

Co-sponsors of this special event include Marina Grand Resort, The City of Michigan City Office of the Mayor and Lubeznik Center for the Arts, with more to come. For further information or to order tickets, please visit the Dunes website, www.dunesarts.org.

— STAFF REPORTS

From the Bleachers

COLUMN BY KURT MARGGRAF IN CHICAGO

When the Bulls were winning six championships in seven years, one of their executives, GM Jerry Krause, apparently wanted a little bit of the credit and said something to the effect of organizations win championships, not players.

At the time the Bulls employed the G.O.A.T, Michael Jordan, Scottie Pippen and Dennis Rodman among others and I found it humorous that a front office guy would even think of saying such a thing. Many Bulls fans hated Jerry Krause and thought he was a knucklehead, and I did too. Thirty-nine years later, I'm not so sure.

Let's start with the Bulls, a franchise that has been severely lacking in championship players and a strong organization for years. Everything about the team is mediocre, and it has been for years.

They seem unable to pick a lane and try to build a team with youngsters or go the veteran route. There have been flashes of brilliance but injuries and/or bad luck have derailed the little success they have achieved.

The Blackhawks had a run of greatness with Patrick Kane and Jonathan Toews, but since then, they have fallen on hard times. They seemed to be going in the right direction, and they got lucky to be able to draft Connor Bedard, but so far, all of the great young players they acquired have fallen short of expectations. They may be really good again in a year or two.

The White Sox are a mess. The organization is in shambles, and the players need a lot of work. After all, you don't lose more games than any team in the history of the major leagues by being really good at much of anything.

The Cubs almost went a second week of spring training without a loss.

Sunday, the Reds put a stop to the winning streak by beating them 7-3 to drop the Cubs record to 8-1.

The season looks very promising, as long as their owner doesn't cheat the team and their fans by not spending the money necessary to compete. The organization and the players appear to be capable of making the playoffs.

Finally. we arrive at the Bears.

For many years, fans blamed the organization for the teams woes. I always made an attempt to stick up for them, but it seemed a fool's task. Year after year, bad coach & GM after bad coach & GM, bad quarterback after bad quarterback.

Nothing seemed to work out well for the team, but it seems like this year they may have struck gold. The hottest available coach, Ben Johnson, who happens to be an offensive genius, wanted to be the Bears coach and the organization welcomed him with open arms.

For the first time in forever, the Bears have an excellent coach and a potential franchise quarterback. I'm convinced that they will be fighting for a playoff spot this year.

Seven people, including Paul Stokey and Mary Travers of Peter Paul & Mary wrote the lyrics to Stewball: "And a-way up yonder / Ahead of them all / Came a-prancin' and a-dancing' My noble Stewball."

Be kind. Talk to you next week. Peace, love, and happiness.

Glory is fleeting, but obscurity is forever.
— Napoleon Bonaparte

Post season let down for improved Raiders

BY STAN MADDUX

The Red Arrow Raiders failed to advance past the first round of the District 4 girls' high school basketball tournament.

The Raiders on Monday, March 3, lost to Constantine 51-15 at Bridgman High School, which was hosting the tournament.

Raiders Head Coach Jason Alexander urged his players, who noticeably improved since the start of the season, to believe in themselves during a timeout after Constantine scored the first 13 points of the game.

His talk seemed to work because the next six points were scored by the Raiders on quick three point buckets from Peyton Swain and Laney Strother.

What looked like a burst of magic soon vanished, though, as Constantine, which was more skilled in their execution on offense, scored the last 10 points of the first quarter.

The Raiders, who were also plagued by numerous turnovers, trailed 34-6 at halftime.

This was the first year for the Raiders, which was created by the merging of the girls' basketball programs at New Buffalo and River Valley high schools.

They finished the season with a record of 9-12.

Alexander is optimistic about the future of the team of mostly sophomores, who showed good ability to compete against solid teams.

He believes the players to reach their potential must improve in areas like ball handling and passing to avoid costly turnovers against pressure defenses.

Bison fall short in comeback for district title

BY STAN MADDUX

The New Buffalo High School boys' basketball team fought back from a 14-point second half deficit but fell short in the District 4 tournament championship game to Michigan Lutheran Friday, Feb. 28.

The final score of the game at Our Lady of the Lake School in St. Joseph was 57-52.

"Our kids fought tremendously and bravely. They kept their composure and I'm so proud of them," said Head Coach Nate Tripp.

The Bison, who finished second in their division of the Berrien Cass St. Joseph conference, seemed outmatched by the conference champs in their division in the first half.

Michigan Lutheran with an obvious height advantage scored a number of buckets from offensive rebounds in the first two quarters.

The Bison also couldn't stop Ty Johnson, who scored 19 first half points that included five three point shots.

New Buffalo, which was struggling to score because of a smothering Titans defense, went into halftime trailing by 12 points.

The Bison quickly started the second half by narrowing the lead to eight points on two quick buckets close to the rim by 6'4" center Lucas Forker, who went on to score the next four points for New Buffalo.

The third quarter ended, though, with New Buffalo down by 14 points and seeming mentally defeated.

However, the Bison caught fire.

The fourth quarter opened with a spectacular bucket down low by senior M'Nason Smothers after he grabbed a nifty pass from Nick Haskins.

The lead was later cut to six points when Trevor James nailed an eight-foot jump shot and then four points from another bucket down low by a very determined looking Forker.

However, the Titans quickly went back up by 10 points.

The refusing to give up Bison pulled back to within six points on a lay-up from a fast moving and penetrating James Shaw, with four minutes left in the game.

The lead was narrowed to five points, with two minutes left on the clock.

New Buffalo was still down by five points when Forker fouled out of the game with just over a minute left in the game.

The Titans, who were up by seven points until James sank a three point shot, finished the scoring by hitting a free throw right before the final buzzer.

Forker, who was the team's leading scorer during the regular season, led the Bison with 23 points.

James added 13 points.

Tripp said he started the game by having his players in a zone defense to try and limit the size and athletic ability of the senior laden Titans, but his team of mostly juniors seemed to respond better after switching to a man to man defense in the second half.

He also reminded his players on defense to key on Johnson, who scored just four second half points.

New Buffalo finished the season at 15-9.

The Titans enter the regionals at 19-5.

"We really made that run and got back in it. Unfortunately, we dug ourselves too big of a hole in the first half," he said.

AL FUEGO GRILL & BAR TO CUT CELEBRATORY RIBBON WITH CHAMBER

A ribbon-cutting ceremony for Al Fuego Grill & Bar is scheduled for 6 p.m. Tuesday, March 18.

The ceremony will be part of the Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce Member Mixer, which begins at 5:30 p.m. at the restaurant's location in New Buffalo.

Al Fuego Grill & Bar recently expanded their offerings to include a full-service bar serving cocktails, beer and craft margaritas, which complement the expansive menu of traditional foods with creative twists and American favorites.

The owner, Abundio Jr Xolio Cobaxin, is excited to invite the community to fully experience their fun vibe with something for everyone to enjoy. For those planning a special event, there is a large colorful room to rent with a Mexican flair.

Al Fuego Grill & Bar is open year-round and can easily be found at 18925 Harbor Country Drive in New Buffalo – just north of Exit 1.

For more information, please call 269-586-3615, visit www.alfuegogrillbar.toast.site or their Facebook page. — STAFF REPORTS

TASTE THE AMERICAN SPIRIT
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Explore our factory and production floors to learn about the process behind our organic grain-to-glass spirits and the history of Journeyman. Tours end with an in-depth review and tasting of 10+ spirits. Tours offered weekly at both locations.
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Letting the good times roll at American Legion Mardi Gras Fundraiser

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

For two years in a row, the Three Oaks American Legion Post 204's Mardi Gras Fundraiser has been raising funds towards the remodeling of the legion's kitchen to better serve veterans and the community.]

At this year's Mardi Gras, which took place Saturday, March 1, it was announced that the fundraising had paid off.

"I'm thrilled to announce that, April 1, we are going to be full steam ahead in starting the remodeling project," Dyane Thomas-Niemzyk, who chaired the event with Brandi Hamann, said.

She said that plans are for the project to begin to be demoed April 1 and that that evening's proceeds will "solidify" the fundraising effort.

A hallway will be knocked off, which will result in a bigger kitchen.

Thomas-Niemzyk said that members of the legion's auxiliary volunteer their time every month to cook and serve meals to shut-in veterans. Volunteers bring meals on a quarterly basis to The Robert L. Miller Sr. Veterans Center, which is a homeless shelter for veterans in South Bend. Auxiliary members also put on an annual sit-down Veterans Day turkey dinner.

The legion also plays host to a variety of community fundraisers. In January, it hosted "Pasta for a Princess," which raised funds for the ongoing rehabilitation of River Valley Elementary School teacher Shelly Taylor after she was involved in an accident. "A Fundraiser for Daniel," which will include a spaghetti dinner and silent auction, to raise funds for a local adult, Daniel Bowman, who was just diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia, is on tap from 4-8 p.m. Sunday, March 30.

"It is clear that these improvements we'll be making for our kitchen will be a clear catalyst for many more meaningful initiatives," Thomas, who's a member of the legion's auxiliary and whose husband is the commander, said.

Guests enjoy a Cajun style buffet

Co-chairs Dyane Thomas Niemzyk and Brandi Hamann welcome guests

Chris Dudeck with a donated quilt that was raffled off

Guests dance to the tunes of Ol' Style Band

Second Runner-up to Miss Three Oaks Mikayla Falzone, Miss Three Oaks and River Valley Ava Marie Ledesma and first runner-up Lydia Habel

Guests got decked out in Mardi Gras ensembles for the celebration

Guests gather at the candle lit tables

Erica Price, Jen McReynolds and Janice Frisco celebrate Mardi Gras

Guests mix and mingle in the legion

Silent auction items filled the tables

David Bruno kept the drinks flowing

Ol' Style Band comes out of retirement for the celebration

Thomas-Niemzyk thanked her co-chair, Hamann and her husband, Matt Lindsay, who was responsible for creating and cooking that night's menu, for making the event possible.

Guests, who came decked out in colorful beads, feathery necklaces and glittery masks, congregated at tables in a candle-lit room for a cocktail hour before digging into a spread of what Lindsay said was "pretty traditional" Cajun cuisine: red beans and rice, gumbo, a "voodoo chicken" with Caribbean and Cajun flavors, a shrimp with Cajun cream sauce, gumbo and jambalaya.

He said he was looking forward to the "really nice facelift," which will includes opening the wall and upgrades to the floor, that the kitchen will undergo.

"I think we're going to be well on our way – hopefully, we're going to get started and be done for summer," Lindsay said.

Guests could view a variety of silent auction items, which included items that were donated by local businesses.

A quilt, which was donated by Joyce Beldorth Patrick, was also being raffled off to be given to a legion officer.

Chris Dudek, who was volunteering to help at that night's event, said that guests could buy a ticket for $1 and place it in a small box next to a picture of a veteran and officer of the legion. The tickets would be counted to see who won the quilt.

"So, it's kind of a win-win because they're getting rewarded for doing their services here and the legion gets the money for improvements," she said.

There was also a photo booth, where guests could get outfitted in fun costumes for an impromptu picture.

Later in the evening, there was live entertainment: Ol' Style Band, which was coming out of retirement after nine years, took the stage.

Thomas-Niemzyk said the efforts to put on the evening and raise the necessary funds is a "reflection of the strength and the unity of our community."

"And for that, we are deeply thankful…I truly believe we live in one of the best communities there is," she said.

Announcing The Acorn's 2025 Singer-Songwriter Competition

The Acorn's 13th annual Singer-Songwriter Competition is now open for submissions.

The deadline for entries is noon Thursday, May 8.

Six singer-songwriters will be selected as finalists to perform Saturday, July 19. An esteemed panel of judges and the beloved Acorn audience will participate as six finalists take the stage for this thrilling performance, with the field narrowing to the 'top three' artists over the course of two rounds.

Three video entries of original songs are required. Each song must have accompanying lyric sheets with the song title and songwriter's name on each song and video performances being as close to "live" as possible. Submissions are evaluated on song structure, lyrics, musicality, overall appeal and the ability of the performer to sustain a full-length show. Full submission guidelines are detailed at The Acorn's website on the 2025 Singer-Songwriter Competition page at acornlive.org.

Finalists are considered for other Acorn shows and recommended for other area events. Cash prizes are awarded to the top six finalists.

The Acorn is a rare and remarkable performing arts venue presenting high-quality, professional live entertainment. The intimate and eclectic non-profit performance space features rock, folk, Americana, indie, blues, jazz, bluegrass, open mics, comedy, films and more. Performers of incomparable talent delight audiences year-round in an acoustically rich and unique space.

In 2024, The Acorn presented more than 150 performances. Local artists shared new works, regional performers embraced the opportunity to springboard their careers, and renowned national and international artists reconnected with their art in The Acorn's intimate setting. The Acorn's commitment to community continues to grow each year, with 2024 expanding to include more community events than ever before.

The Acorn's mission is as follows: "To offer a broad range of high-quality arts and education programming that nurtures cultural, experience, participation and community engagement among residents and visitors of all ages and enhances the economic vitality of the region. — STAFF REPORTS

A royal afternoon at Three Oaks library

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Just in time for March is Reading Month, members of local royalty took the time out of their other engagements to stop by story time at Three Oaks Township Public Library Thursday, Feb. 27

In keeping with the royal theme, 2025 Miss Three Oaks/ River Valley and Miss Congeniality Ava-Marie Ledesma and first runner-up Lydia Habel read royal-themed picture books to a group of young book lovers.

Afterward, Ledesma and Habel, along with other members of the 2025 Miss Three Oaks/River Valley Royal Court helped everyone make crowns (which were bespeckled with sparkles) so that they, too, could be royalty for an afternoon.

Miss Three Oaks and River Valley Ava Marie Ledesma reads a royal themed story

Young readers decorate crowns during thr royal storytime

Amelia and Cooper Murphy with their crowns

Young readers hang out with royalty at Three Oaks Township Public Library

HOROSCOPE

MARCH 6-12, 2025

AS INTERPRETED BY SANDY "STAR" BENDT

ARIES MARCH 21—APRIL 19

The energy coming your way this week is all about having the space and the means to rest, process and refresh your mind and body. The coming weeks have an intensity that you will be able to intuitively prepare for now. So, give yourself time to visualize and know what's ahead, now.

TAURUS APRIL 20—MAY 20

There's a certain excitement and feeling of satisfaction that comes from being part of a group this week. It lets you know you are not alone and gives you hope that by that working together common goals will be accomplished more easily and efficiently, ultimately moving everyone ahead.

GEMINI MAY 21—JUNE 21

It would appear that you have all the personal and financial help that you need but trust your instincts and gut feelings before you proceed with any drastic actions. Things may not be as clear cut as you think and you may need to rely on your intuitive sense, rather than relying on what seems obvious.

CANCER JUNE 22—JULY 22

Delve deeper into the brand and image you align yourself with because you are being given the space to explore and the means to find something better. This is the time to evaluate where you are with your career and what you can do to improve that position. The future is always changing.

LEO JULY 23—AUGUST 22

The vibe this week will push you to make deeper commitments and get more involved with someone on a much deeper level. You will have the ability to see where this connection will take you on an intuitive level. So, be sure to reveal your true intentions at the onset to avoid ethical issues later.

VIRGO AUGUST 23—SEPTEMBER 22

This is a great time to meet people and connect with a larger purpose or movement. Interactions with others will prompt you to put more thought into your current connections and will make you feel more committed to issues that unite people and form a sense of brotherhood and unity.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23—OCTOBER 22

Even though you have things scheduled, it doesn't necessarily mean they will happen. There is an element of having to go with the flow and waiting till opportunities actually present themselves before they can be seized on. Wait grasshopper, use your intuition to know when to strike.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23—NOVEMBER 21

There may seem like there is a lot of constraints and limits being placed on you this week but you are actually in the flow of a nice swell that is getting larger and more powerful. Even though things are being activated, this is not the time to skim over things or leave things up to chance.

SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22—DECEMBER 21

Prepare yourself for some strange and unusual happenings at home or with family that could interfere with some of your other commitments. Before causing yourself a lot of heartache and time constraints, use your instincts when evaluating odd activities. They may not be all that serious.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22—JANUARY 19

Interacting with people will spurn you to look deeper into issues that deal with the family and homelife. Take time to pull back and understand alternative perspectives before dismissing them, as they may come back to haunt you. Failure to see and you will repeat their same mistakes.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20—FEBRUARY 18

You don't have to go all in and risk everything to make progress now. The energy coming your way is all about doing less and receiving more. Move away from having to make things happen to a place of accepting what you want. Allow things to flow in naturally. No need to force it now.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19—MARCH 20

There is an intense vibe radiating your way from the cosmos this week. Your energy levels and sense of adventure will be activated. That doesn't mean you should throw caution to the wind. In fact, circumspection, being cautious and using your intuition is very important now.

Fashion fades, only style remains the same.
— Coco Chanel

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Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

7							5	8
5	8	6			7	3		
	1	3						
	7			4				
		8				4		3
	4		6	9				1
		9	3			7		5
6	5				4	9		

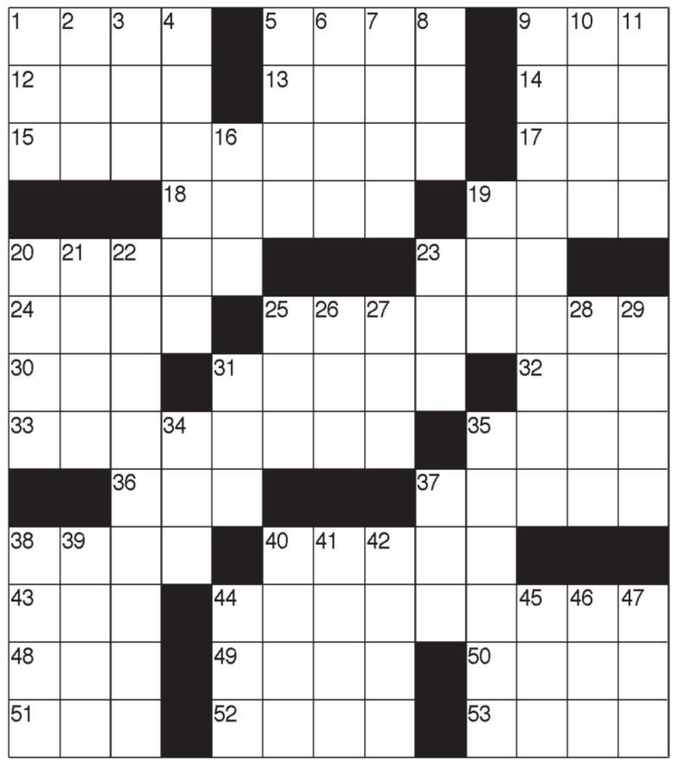
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Andes' cold higher region
5 Broad structural basin
9 Federal Trade Commission (abbr.)
12 Cork
13 Ass or donkey (Ger.)
14 Poetic contraction
15 Moon
17 Sheep's cry
18 Nothing (Fr.)
19 Musical beat
20 Amer. Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (abbr.)
23 Arabic letter
24 Pipe (Scot.)
25 Image
30 Wing
31 Pole in Gaelic games
32 Alas
33 Time
35 Wild pig
36 Fr. pronoun
37 Doctrine
38 Explorer Ericson
40 Goodbye (Fr.)
43 Siamese twin
44 Sinuous
48 Amer. Dental Assn. (abbr.)
49 Braz. heron
50 Lade
51 River to the Sea of Azov
52 Shak. contraction
53 Quod ____ demonstrandu

DOWN

1 Additional postscript (abbr.)
2 Diminutive (suf.)
3 Cola
4 Means
5 Web
6 Hindu month
7 Balto-Slav
8 Beer
9 Gilt (2 words)
10 Tree
11 Supporter (suf.)
16 "Brave Bulls" author
19 Prepare leather
20 Academy (abbr.)
21 Philippines archipelago
22 Grouse
23 The (Ger.)
25 Fr. medieval tale
26 Kwa language
27 Barbie's boyfriend
28 Visible juncture
29 Fermented palm juice
31 Cents (abbr.)
34 Amer. Expeditionary Forces (abbr.)
35 Inlaid decoration
37 River into the North Sea
38 Head
39 Within (pref.)
40 Wild ox
41 Carplike fish
42 Religious image
44 Fast jet
45 Comparative (suf.)
46 "The Jungle Book" python
47 Eastern daylight time (abbr.)



To Your Health

COLUMN BY KAREN EDWARDS ND

INTERMITTANT FASTING FOR BETTER HEALTH

When our body is in a state of autophagy, it allows us to maintain a cellular symphony. Autophagy is a cellular process where your body breaks down and recycles its own damaged waste. It's a natural cleaning out process that begins when your cells are deprived of nutrients. Medical researchers are studying autophagy's role in potentially preventing and fighting disease. The Ancients always knew this to be healing to the body.

Autophagy in brain cells cleans up harmful proteins linked to diseases like Alzheimer's and clears out damaged cells, protecting against cognitive decline.Holding back on unnecessary calories can heal. Look at any animal when they are sick or wounded. They will go off by themselves and Fast, just drinking water until they heal. It is nature's way.

Intermittent fasting is one of the best ways to get your body into autophagy. This process allows your body to rest and recycle. It is a time restricted eating. The idea that came along of eating three meals a day is absurd. Our digestive system does not have the capacity to break down that amount of food spanned through an entire day.

Intermittent fasting is eating less, but more dense nutritional foods. It reduces the risk of cancer, helps with weight loss, helps with your sleep and gives your body more energy.

To start intermittent fasting, begin with 16/8. This is having a window of 8 hours to feed. Your first meal is BREAKfast. Even if this begins at noon, you are still BREAKING a fast. Maybe eat between 10 and 6 to start. Stop after 6. This allows your digestive organs to process and break down the foods that you consumed in these 8 hours of feeding. Maybe have one bigger healthy meal, and snack on fruit or veggies and humus the other hours when you feel hungry. Make sure to stay hydrated and drink plenty of water during your periods of not eating.

We have gotten ourselves in serious health trouble over the years of over indulging, eating the wrong foods, and going to bed on a full belly. Our ancestors knew to eat only during times the sun was up. Our circadian rhythm is governed by the sun. It regulates our internal clock. We have a time for eating, digestion, then absorption. We cannot absorb nutrients when we are still in digestive mode. Let your body digest all evening and be ready to absorb upon going to bed. Then sleep soundly!

If you are on medications, check with your healthcare practitioner. Some Rx requires you to eat with food. Do your own research and don't be fearful of healthy foodsand times best to eat them. Switch out the chemically laden processed foods for more fruits and vegetables. Instead of drinking coffee and soda through the day, switch to herbal teas and water. Stop eating everything 3 hours before bedtime. These changes will make a huge difference in your health.

Disclaimer: Nothing in these articles is meant to replace medical advice. If you are on medications, do not stop taking them. This is for educational purposes.

Disclaimer: Nothing in these articles is meant to replace medical advice. If you are on medications, do not stop taking them. This is for educational purposes.

Karen Edwards is a board-Certified Dr. of Naturopathy, Master Herbalist, Vegan and Raw food Chef. She is owner of Holistic Alternatives in New Buffalo and La Porte for over 25 years.

A Writer's Life...

DURING THE GOLDEN AGE OF TELEVISION ANIMATION

BY JACK OLESKER

The lightbulb goes on

I love doing research. For my historical novel, The Young Dragons, published in 1982 by Signet, I did seven months of deep research. With the saga to be set in 1800s China and California, I learned about China's Szechwan province, the history and culture of China, the history and culture of California, San Francisco, the construction of the transcontinental railroad and The Gold Rush that brought over 3,000 people from across America and abroad to the Golden State.

When the dust cleared I had nearly 500 pages of research and character descriptions. I used a lot of it in my novel.

The research job I am presently on won't take nearly so long because I am hot on the trail of what I am looking for. Lori has given me clues: American Greetings and Those Characters From Cleveland. Lori works very hard at the studio. But I know she also likes to have fun, and I have a hunch seeing a newbie sniffing around a mystery isfun for her. I also have a hunch she wants me to solve this mystery.

At the library I read articles about American Greetings. I know they make greeting cards and that they started the subdivision Those Characters From Clevelandto handle merchandise tie-ins for their original greeting cards characters. This leads to television series. Their Strawberry Shortcake character, starting in 1981, would generate $500 million in revenues. But legal entanglements will stop Those Characters From Cleveland from developing a series around her for decades. They are doing okay with The Get Along Gang, but I know they want a hit and The Get Along Gang isn't it.

Then, in a trade magazine, I see two magical words: Care Bears.

I go home, eat yet another pizza and drop into a blissful sleep.

The next morning I walk in to Lori's office and utter the two magical words: "Care Bears."

Lori looks up from a script she's editing, surprised to see me in her doorway at eight-thirty in the morning. "I thought you're a night owl."

"Some things can't wait." I pause, then decide it's myturn to have a little fun. "If you didn't hear me I can shout it at the top of my lungs..."

She grumbles, "Didn't I say to stick to writing and stay away from business?"

I tease, "You're the one who sent me on the hunt."

She waves me in, tells me to close the door. I do. I sit in a chair across from her desk. Then she turns uncharacteristically serious and warns me not to talk to anyone about this because the deal hasn't closed yet.

Giving me kudos for having figured it out, Lori allows, "It does look like we're getting Care Bears." I'm delighted for her and Andy and Jean. When I tell her I know it's a major kids' property she nods and says, "It'll put DIC on the map."

I know it will be disingenuous if I don't ask, so I do. "Does that mean I'll be writing Care Bears scripts?"

She hits me with an answer I'm not expecting. "Maybe...maybe not."

To mix metaphors, we've moved three spaces on the board and now she reminds me she holds all the aces. But I still have a few cards of my own, so I play one by notasking her what she means. Lori leans back in her chair, smiles and says, "You are a smart boy."

Jack Olesker's career in the entertainment industry spans over four decades. He has served as a story editor in L.A. as well as president of a motion picture and television company in Chennai, India. His writing ranges from Mighty Morphin Power Rangers, Care Bears and Hello Kitty's Furry Tale Theater to documentaries and horror novels and murder mysteries for adults.

Coastline Children's Film Festival returns for 15th year

The 15th annual Coastline Children's Film Festival, which will include features, shorts, documentaries and silent films, will take place at various southwest Michigan venues from Friday, March 14, through Sunday, March 23.

"Fifteen years ago, we were inspired by the 8 ½ FOUNDATION (eightandahalf.org). Founded by Tilda Swinton and Mark Cousins, its mission is to make great films available to young people everywhere: 'And we have noticed over the many hundred cinema journeys we have taken that our most memorable may be made many decades ago, may be made without color, may be with subtitles or not a single spoken word,'" the film festival's official release said.

"That idea became our mandate, our manifesto. For 10 days, we invite you to enjoy a selection of full-length features, documentaries, short films and classic silent films for free," the release further stated.

On Friday, March 14, the Krasl Art Center will kick off the event with an "Opening Night Costume Party," where guests can come as their favorite animated character and win a prize for most creative costume. Festivities begin at 6 p.m., with popcorn and a music performance featuring the First Grade Choir from South Elementary School (Watervliet) led by Brandon Mattson. "Little Kid Flicks," a selection of animated and live action shorts from the New York International Children's Film Festival (NYICFF), will begin at 7 p.m.

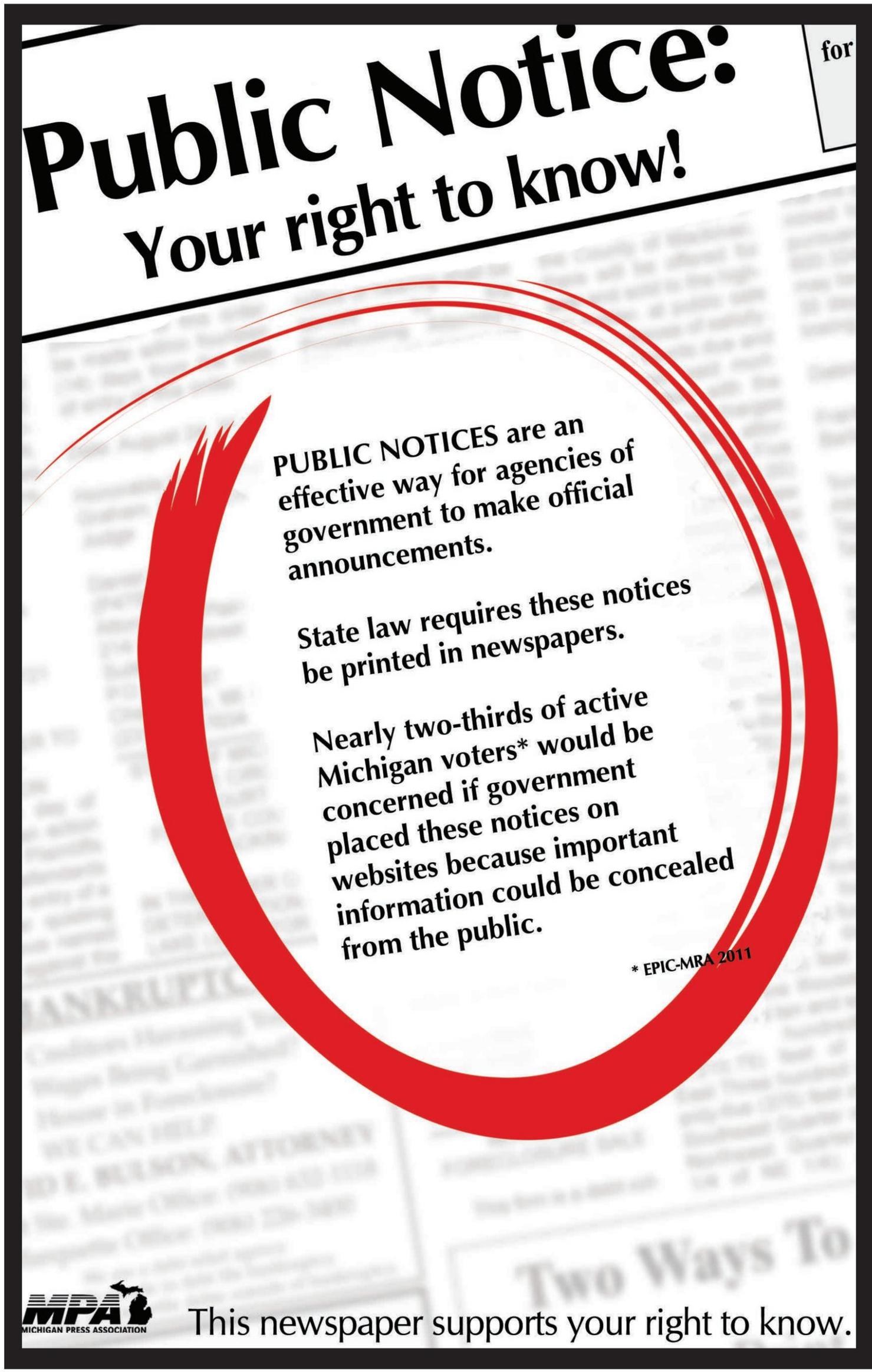
The "Young Filmmakers Competition" will premiere at New Buffalo Township Library Saturday, March 15. This year's competition will feature 23 short films by young visionaries from all over the United States. Awards will be presented Red Carpet-style Friday, March 21, at The GhostLight Theatre.

Other events will include a "Night Hike Owl and Prowl" at Sarett Nature Center (Benton Harbor), a "Costume Design Workshop" on the creation and effects of good costume designs led by costumer Candace Meyers (Sawyer) and a screening of "The Most Dangerous Year" followed by a discussion led by Mary Jo Schnell and others from the Outcenter Southwest Michigan (Sawyer). Additionally, there will be a special screening of "Celebrating Black Stories" (Benton Harbor). To close out the festival, southwest Michigan's own Dr. Larry Schanker will provide improvisational piano accompaniment for a silent film at The Acorn (Three Oaks) Sunday, March 23.

All events are free but donations will be accepted.

The Coastline Children's Film Festival is made possible through financial support from Harvey & Virginia Kimmel Family Fund of the Philadelphia Foundation, Michigan Arts and Culture Council & National Endowment for the Arts and The Pokagon Fund. The sponsors are Ann Krsul Architect, Brookview Montesorri School, Fruitbelt Sparkling Fruit Tonic and Red Arrow Roasters.

For more information, visit www.coastlinechildrensfilmfestival.com. — STAFF REPORTS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HIKERS TO EXPLORE ANIMAL FOLKLORE

The legends that surround the animals that share our environment will be explored during a Saturday, March 15, hike at Bluhm County Park in Westville, Indiana.

Pat Fisher, the leader of Harbor Country Hikers, will talk about the misunderstandings these legends can create, and the misguided conclusions to which they can lead.

The hike starts at 1p.m., with a brief introduction and is expected to last about two hours. The trail is rated "easy", with rolling hills. Bluhm County Park was created in 1992 after Gayle and Lucille Bluhm donated 96 acres to La Porte County. It contains eight miles of hiking, biking, mountain biking, horseback riding and cross-country skiing trails.

Although membership is preferred, all are welcome to join this hike. For more information, including driving directions, visit the Hikers' website, www.harborcountryhikers.com. — STAFF REPORTS

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PUBLIC NOTICES

NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS IS ACCEPTING STUDENTS FOR THE BISON BEGINNERS PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM AND KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS FOR THE 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR.

It is helpful to know how many students we will have as we begin planning for the 2025-2026 school year. If you believe your child will qualify for either the Bison Beginners Pre-Kindergarten program or for Kindergarten, please contact the office at 269-469-6060 so we can make sure your student is on our enrollment list. You can also email the elementary school's administrative assistant Jenna Wendel at jwendel@nbas.org. Please contact the office by Monday, April 7, 2025. You will need to include the following information: child's name, birth date, parent/guardian name, address, phone number and email address.

BISON BEGINNERS
Parents/guardians that have children who will be four years old by September 1, 2025 are able to register their child for the Bison Beginners Pre-kindergarten program. The program offers both half-day (a.m. only) or full-day sessions. Enrollment is limited to 25 students.

KINDERGARTEN
Parents/guardians with students that will be five years old by September 1, 2025 are able to register their child for the full-day kindergarten program.

SCHOOL OF CHOICE AND TUITION
If you do not reside in the New Buffalo Area Schools district but do live in Michigan, you are welcome to apply for the School of Choice program. Tuition is also an available enrollment option for students living out-of-state. Information and applications for both programs are on our district's website: https://www.nbas.org/o/nbas/page/school-of-choice-and-tuition-students.

HEARING/VISION/DENTAL SCREENING
Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students planning to attend New Buffalo Elementary for the 2025-2026 school year will be able to have their hearing, vision and dental screening performed by the Berrien County Health Department on Tuesday, April 29, 2025 from 1:00-3:00 pm at New Buffalo Elementary. Appointments are required - please call or email the school office to schedule. This screening is required by the state of Michigan for kindergarten and highly encouraged by our district for pre-kindergarten. Please bring your student's birth certificate (original or a copy), student's immunization record and parent/guardian picture ID.

If you will not be attending the health screening on April 29, please contact the Berrien County Health Department at 269-926-7121, extension 5293 to schedule an appointment or visit their website for more information: www.berriencounty.org/634/hearing-vision-screening.

PET OF THE WEEK

EVIE

This girl might be the best thing to add to your home, as she would love to bring the best things. Evie is almost two years old, spayed, and her vacctinations are up-to-date. She might just be your best friend with her wiggles and nothing but the best of happy times. Evie weighs just over 30 pounds, and prefers to give her love the people who give her love. Evie is very polite, and can learn more than to sit with treat training. She loves to learn, and Evie could learn to love anyone and anything in your home.

AVAILABLE AT THE MICHIANA HUMANE SOCIETY

LOCAL INTELLIGENCE
New Buffalo Times
— SINCE 1942 —

7	9	4	1	3	6	2	5	8
5	8	6	4	2	7	3	1	9
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ad COUNCIL
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Kaliee M.
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Guests purchase books from the PTO's book fair

First graders' accordion-style books on display

Children browse the book fair shelves

Art and literature celebrated at 'Artists and Authors Night'

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Artistic and literary worlds collided during Artist and Authors Night, which took place at New Buffalo Elementary School Wednesday, Feb. 26.

Books that were written and made by students were displayed on tables throughout the school. A mini art gallery was set up in the cafeteria, where the work of young artists was also displayed.

Students could peruse and purchase books from a variety of authors as part of the Parent Teacher Organization's Scholastic Book Fair and participate in a scavenger hunt to win a prize.

Erin Ledyard, elementary art teacher, said that this Authors and Artists Night marked the first one during which the classroom teachers and the art department collaborated to have the students build their books.

"The kids all took the structure of the accordion book style, and we made that in here – they kind of illustrated it, they made the covers, so we put it all together in the art room and then they took it back to their classroom teachers and they did the writing," she said.

The themes, which aligned with the curriculum at each grade level, were chosen by the teachers. Third graders wrote books that were inspired by their recent field trip to the Shedd Aquarium, while the second grade's theme was "Up, Up and Away." The fifth graders made "fractured fairy tales" books, which included covers that were carved in clay.

"They started with wet clay and did a sketch on it and did a relief technique and then we fired the clay, so the cover was stable for them and then they built the book out from that," Ledyard said.

Students got to take their books home at the end of the night.

"They are so proud of what they did - they loved joining the art and the writing together," Ledyard said.

Fourth grader Carly Cox had enjoyed writing a book that centered around Bad Kitty, which is a character from the Nick Bruel books.

The plot of her book, which contained illustrations from water paint and marker, stemmed from Bad Kitty rushing into Barney's to retrieve a pen and paper.

"I had to take the note and the picture of Bad Kitty writing a note to the neighbors and turn it into a book," Cox, who has three cats at home, said.

Artwork that was on display in the cafeteria, as well as on the walls throughout the building, included two-dimensional art and paintings, drawings and some sculpted items.

"Each grade level has a different curriculum focus and so for K-2, we focus on the basic – elements, shapes, principles and colors and then we really get into the cultural aspects when we move into upper elementary," Ledyard said.

Guests could view the students' works in progress, which were on display in the art room. Instruments, which were inspired by Jacob Lawrence, were carved out of cardboard before students painted them with colors and collages. Inspired by the elementary school's "Kindness Month," students made puppets and sets, with the goal of recording skits based on acts of kindness.

The students' artwork will be displayed at The Acorn Center for the Performing Arts in Three Oaks in the future as well as with artwork from middle/high school artists in the school district's STEAM building during next month's Art Attack.

Middle/high school art teacher Ashley Jager said she enjoys working with the youngest artists.

"She's got Clay Club, and I've got Pottery Club, and we've collaborated before and we'll do projects together," she said.

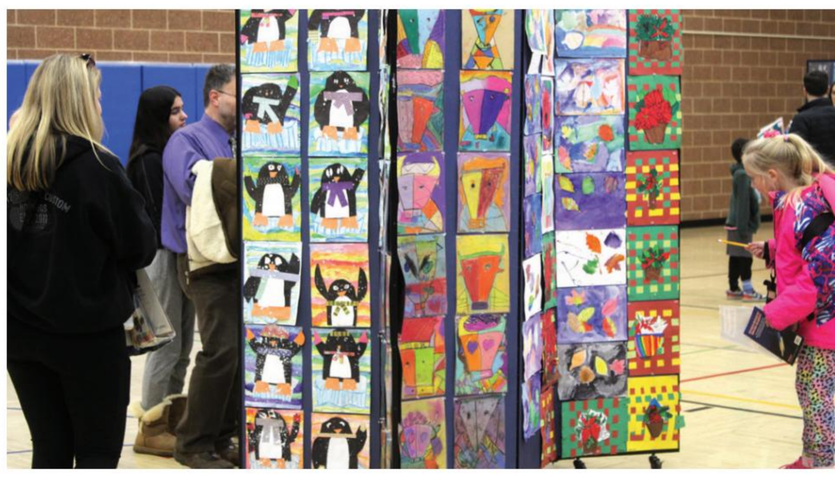
On the literary side, Title One Coordinator Sarah Mead said that the school does collaborations through the book vending machines, as The Pokagon Fund and the PTO contribute to them through book giveaways.

She hopes that the night represents many more collaborations to come with the school and community.

"Everyone's coming together working for one goal and that's just to celebrate our kids and what they can do," Mead said.

Guests hunt for clues in the art gallery

Guests peruse the fifth graders' fractured fairy tale books



Guests browse the art gallery in the cafeteria

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